

CHAPTER XV

THE MORES CAN MAKE ANYTHING RIGHT AND PREVENT CONDEMNATION OF ANYTHING

The mores define the limits which make right and wrong.
— punishments. — Prisons in England in the eighteenth century. — Wars of factions ; penalties of defeat. — Bundling. — Two forms of bundling. — Mediaeval bundling. — Poverty and wooing. — Night wooing in the North American colonies. — Reasons for it. — Public lupanars. — The end of the lupanars. — Education needed to clarify the judgment.

572. Mores define the limits which make anything right. At every turn we find new evidence that the mores can make anything right. What they do is that they cover a usage in dress, language, behavior, manners, etc., with the mantle of current custom, and give it regulation and limits within which it becomes unquestionable. The limit is generally a limit of toleration. Literature, pictures, exhibitions, celebrations, and festivals are controlled by some undefined, and probably undefinable, standard of decency and propriety, which sets a limit of toleration on the appeals to fun, sensuality, and various prejudices. In regard to all social customs, the mores sanction them by defining them and giving them form. Such regulated customs are etiquette. The regulation by the mores always gives order and form, and thus surrounds life with limits within which we may and beyond which we may not pursue our interests (e.g. property and marriage). Horseplay and practical jokes have been tolerated, at various times and places, at weddings. They require good-natured toleration, but soon run to excess and may become unendurable. The mores set the limits or define the disapproval. The wedding journey was invented to escape the "jokes/" The rice and old shoes will soon be tabooed. The mores fluctuate in

their prescriptions. If the limits are too narrow,
there is an over-
flow into vice and abuse, as was proved by
seventeenth-century